## (December 29, 2008) Suburban Life: Some towns prepare for more trains, others anticipate less rail

http://www.mysuburbanlife.com/itasca/news/x1060490604/Some-towns-prepare-for-more-trains-others-anticipate-less-rail-traffic

After a yearlong fight, communities along the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railway are now preparing for the increase in train traffic that will come with Canadian National Railway's purchase of the little-used rail line.

The federal Surface Transportation Board approved the deal Dec. 24, clearing the way for Montreal-based CN to buy the EJ&E from U.S. Steel Corp. for \$300 million. But the board also imposed conditions on the purchase that will help offset the environmental impact on towns through which the EJ&E runs.

The ruling becomes official Jan. 23, and CN expects to close on the transaction after that.

The EJ&E runs in an arc from Waukegan to Joliet to northwest Indiana, passing through DuPage County in Bartlett and West Chicago, among other towns. Since it announced the proposed purchase in September 2007, CN has contended that it will reduce congestion by shifting trains from its crowded existing lines to the less-used EJ&E.

Many towns along the line banded together to oppose the purchase, but in recent weeks several have negotiated individual agreements with CN to mitigate the negative effects of the purchase. Bartlett and West Chicago did not reach deals.

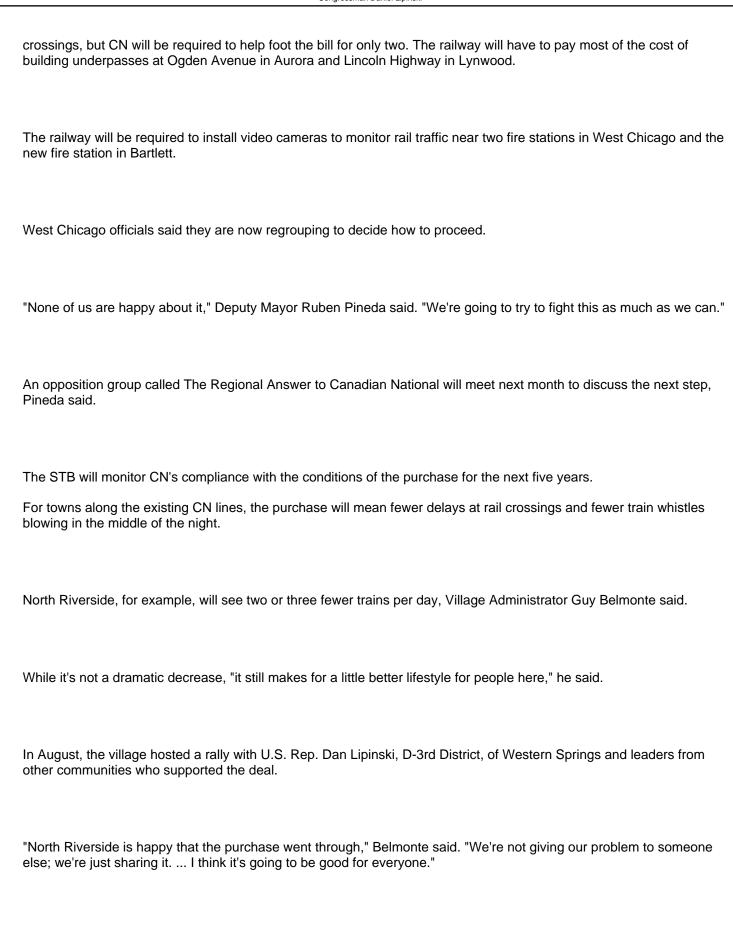
"CN is now a stakeholder in Bartlett and in our neighboring suburbs," Village President Catherine Melchert said in a written statement. "We can only hope that they will step up and accept their newfound responsibility to the municipalities in this region."

The EJ&E intersects West Bartlett and Stearns roads west of Route 59. The average number of trains that will use the line through Bartlett will quadruple and the gross tons of daily freight will increase by more than 600 percent, according to the Surface Transportation Board's environmental impact statement.

The village plans to continue negotiating with CN to limit blockages at crossings, give the village the authority to fine CN for excessive blockages, discontinue or limit use of a switching yard near West Bartlett Road, and build underpasses at West Bartlett and Stearns roads, along with several other conditions.

Several communities said the increase in train traffic would create the need for an underpass or overpass at EJ&E

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